



# Western Village Growth and Sewer Policy Recommendations

Joint Planning Commission/Public Works  
Advisory Board Work Group

November 26, 2013

## Introduction

In an effort to bring the many new and existing policy directions affecting the eleven western County villages into a coherent whole the Joint Planning Commission and Public Works Advisory work group reviewed the issues and policy framework affecting the County's western villages. The villages of concern are listed below:

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Bellevue    | 7. Newcomb     |
| 2. Bozman      | 8. Royal Oak   |
| 3. Claiborne   | 9. Tunis Mills |
| 4. Copperville | 10. Unionville |
| 5. McDaniel    | 11. Wittman    |
| 6. Neavitt     |                |

The Workgroup's recommendations are listed below and then are followed by the policy and other factors that help frame the group's recommendations.

## Recommendations

1. Village Zoning Density and Minimum Lot Size—Density would require 2 acres for each dwelling unit with a minimum lot size of 1 acre. This would apply to all village zoning designations, i.e., Village Center (VC), Village Hamlet (VC2), and Village Residential (VC1), provided all other development standards can be complied with.
2. Density and Sewer Availability—The density and minimum lot size would not be affected by the availability of public sewerage. For villages without sewerage, the actual minimum lot size would likely be determined by the size, location of the sewer disposal area (SDA) and other site feature requirements (e.g. stormwater management). For non-sewerage lots their minimum size is generally 2 acres or greater.
3. Sanitary Sewer Service—Sanitary sewer service would be extended to tier 3b properties and only to other properties located along sewer lines that are public health emergencies and that have no alternative to public sewerage.
4. Comprehensive Planning—the County comprehensive plan and the comprehensive water and sewer plan should have verbiage and appropriate map amendments to more clearly reflect the policy provisions of these recommendations.

5. Village Mapping—The village zoning maps, critical area maps, and sanitary sewer service area maps are recommended to be adjusted to reflect the effect of the state’s tier system (SB 236), and the new critical area maps. Specifically:
  - a. *Zoning boundaries* will be adjusted to reduce the potential for large scale development that would threaten the existing villages’ character and to reflect the tier designations. This mapping will implement the policies of the comprehensive plan and current state law.
  - b. *Sewer Service Areas and Sewer Planning Areas* would be adjusted to reflect existing and proposed service areas to implement the comprehensive plan’s village policies.
  - c. *Critical Area Mapping* provides technical adjustments to some villages to implement the more accurate current boundaries of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.
  - d. *Draft Maps*—Draft maps showing the proposed revised boundaries are attached.

## Supporting Policies

1. Comprehensive Plan 2005:
  - a. Villages should maintain their unique “sense of place” as identified by their existing architectural character, scale, mix of uses and density of development. As infill and redevelopment occurs within the Village Center, it should be required to maintain these attributes. For this reason, it is recommended that the County undertake a master planning process for each of the Village Centers to establish a basis for guiding future infill and redevelopment.” Page 3-8
  - b. CO3.P.17. Residential infill development and redevelopment should be compatible with existing character and density of the village.
2. State Laws:
  - a. *Smart, Green, and Growing - Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009* (HB 297)—Any “action” must be consistent with the policies in the comprehensive plan.
  - b. *State Finance and Procurement Article 7B* 1997—Growth in rural villages is to be limited as expressed below:
    - (f) Rural village.—“Rural village” means a rural village, village center or other unincorporated area that is primarily residential, including an area with historic qualities, that is located in an otherwise rural or agricultural area and for which new growth, if any, would derive primarily from in-fill development or limited peripheral expansion.

(d) Limited peripheral development—“limited peripheral development” means development that is contiguous to an existing community and does not increase the size of the existing community or village by more than 10% of the existing number of dwelling units.

- c. *Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 (SB 236)*—Established the tier system and the criteria for their mapping. It also set a limit on subdivisions greater than 7 new lots in the resource conservation tier along with other administrative requirements for this act’s implementation.